

## An Insight on the Historicity of Pashupatas

<sup>1</sup>Dr.Satendra Kumar Mishra, <sup>2</sup>Prof.(Dr.) Satyarth Prakash Tripathi

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor,

<sup>2</sup>Professor

<sup>1,2</sup>Amity School of Languages, Amity University, Lucknow Campus, Uttar Pradesh, India - 226010

Email – <sup>1</sup>skmishra2@lko.amity.edu

<sup>2</sup>sptripathi@lko.amity.edu

**Abstract:** Under the pre-median situation in the sanctum sanctorum of Panini, Patanjali and other evidences, it has been revealed that the phenomenon of Pashupata cult was manifested in the sixth century BC. A side of the religious revolution can be accepted, whereas on the place of Vedic era naturalism and polytheism, the creation of theism based on devotion was being done and on the other hand the importance of policy, conduct and asceticism in place of Vedic rituals and sacrifices was getting importance. Shaivism is highly coordinated with antiquity (mythology). It is not impossible that the creator of Indus-civilization was in a state of uncertainty on the matter of Pashupata cult. It is also not without doubt that in the Vedic Aryan literature, Rudra-Pashupati ideology has been in circulation, but expressing this view would be consistent with the view of historical justice that the existence of Pashupata cult existed in any situation preceding the fifth-eighth century BC. A reward of this tremendous environment was Pashupata religion that used to pray for the liberation and peace of the society like other 'Shramanik' religious systems.

**Key Words:** Pashupata, Panini, Existence, Sanctorum.

### 1. INTRODUCTION:

The history of the development of the Pashupata cult is clearer than in the history before Guptas, primarily because of the abundance and diversity of the evidences. The source of the Pashupata cult of this period is mainly the following: Vayu Purana, 'Pancharth Bhashya' of Kaundinya, Athvashiras Upanishad, Harshacharita and Kadambari by Baana, Accounts of Huesan-Tsang and the Lakulish-Pashupata's statues along with immediate records and Pashupata temple. The rise of Gupta Dynasty is highly esteemed in India's cultural history, as there was a resurgence of Hinduism in this age. In place of Buddhist and Jainism, Vaishnava, Shaiva and other mythological religions were promoted. The political religion of the Gupta kings was Vaishnava, however, they used to admit the principle of religious tolerance and encouraged other religions. This is the reason that the progress of Shaivism also came in this period. From the era of Chandragupta II, Mathura-column article is a sign of the history of Lakulish-Pashupata sect, because in this record it is clearly mentioned that a Maheshwar Acharya named Uditacharya established two Shivalings in honor of his Gurus namely Kapil and Bhagvat Upmitra. The same Uditacharya has been related to Bhagvat Kushik, who was in the elite disciple tradition of Lakulish. This proves to be an unambiguous form that in the time of Chandragupta II, Pashupata scholars had strong influence in Mathura region. In this period, the authenticity of Pashupata cult is revealed by Kalidas's 'Kumarasambhava', 'Kiratarajuinam' of Bharavi, 'Matthilas Prahasan' of Mahendravarman and many other inscriptions, temples and statues. Kumaragupta I (415-455) was a genius of God Skanda. Vanya Gupta was the devotee of Lord Mahadev. From the Udayagiri records of Chandragupta II, it is known that his minister Veer Shaiv showed his devotion to Lord Shiva. The creature. Prithisena, the Chief of Army Staff of Kumaragupta I, was also told to establish Phallus at a place called Karamdand.

Origin of the Pashupata cult can be traced to fifth century BC. The phenomenon of the cult may probably, but before its creation, its history of development for many centuries is in obscure in the absence of evidences. The Shaiva-description is available in the Mauryan period, but it is indispensable whether its form was communal or not. It is known that in the Maurya period, the general form of Shaivism was questioning the popularity criteria, its relation cannot be declared as specific as any other Shaivite community. If the evidence of Panini and Patanjali is accepted as a historical proof, then the thoughts and feelings of Pashupata cult can be reflected on the field. Panini was related to the north-east India thus it is estimated that the existence of Pashupata cult has remained subdued in this region. Based on the analysis of Sudhakar Chattopadhyay and other Greek authors, the conclusions are that in the beginning, the development area of Pashupata cult was predominating was the eastern India where many subdivisional cults used to operate. After the Mauryan age, the foreign invaders accepted the Indian religions, which was an important reason for the development of mythical religions. There were many Shaiva followers in the Indo-greek, Pahlava and Kushan rulers. Although the fact is that they also encouraged other religions. In the coins of Kushan king, Mauz, there is a male figure depicting the 'dand' and the trident, which Jitundranath Banerjee has recognized as Shiva. Sudhakar Chattopadhyaya, on the basis of Trishul, has considered it as an indivisible symbol of different sects, but it is worth remembering that the 'dand' was a special sign of the Pashupata cult. Hence it is possible that the Mauz has been a

disciple of Pashupata cult. Similarly, engraved images of Trishul and head clad with 'Jata' with 'dand' in the right hand on the coins of Gondofernes are clearly visible. On some other currencies of this same ruler, the skin cloth has been exhibited in the left-hand of Shiva, which was the peculiarity of the Pashupata cult. This leads to the conclusion that this devoted ruler 'Mauz' was devoted to the Pashupata. There is sometimes a painting of leather-based cloth on the coins of Vim Kadaphesus first. On the coins of Kadafis II, a figure has been inscribed with a trident and 'Parsu', type of weapon, and the title of the king has been displayed as 'Maheshwar'. Kanishka is well known for his devotion towards Shaivism. 'Dand' are mostly available in the arms of the Shiva on certain currencies. 'Dand' has also been present on Huvisk's coin. It is important to note that this 'traditional' practice of 'Pashu-Pash' described in the Atharvashiras Upanishad has been visible in most of the coins. Rudra has also been termed as an 'Pash dharak', the one who carries punishment rope, in Shvetashtaver Upanishad. The painted figure of the Shiva is also available on the ancient currencies of early centuries. Jitendra Nath Banerjee has given a detailed description of it. Some of these can be related with the Pashupata cult. For example, 'Ujjainini's' coin has human figure which is holding the 'Dand' in right hands, and in the left hand is 'Kalasha' (which can be considered as a Kamandal). Kapingham had it described as the form of a sun-flame, but this idea was not expedient in terms of scholars. In Banerjee's figure no. 8, human figure has been displayed with three heads. Allen has given it the name of 'Mahakaal'. The three heads of Shiva are also painted on Kushan currencies. We can relate to human figure with 'dand' as the symbol of Pashupata cult because it had a specialty of Shiva holding the 'dand', as well as the Mahakaal form of the Shiva, also called Bhairav, who was the basis of Pashupata opinion. There is also a picture of the Shiva on the local currency of Kunind kingdom. Trident in the right hand and 'dand' in the left hand in these pictures with tiger cloth is a possibility of Pashupata cult. This was the national deity of the state of Kuninda. A copper stamp has been obtained from the place called Sirkap in Takshashila, in which Shiva has taken triceps in the left hand and has 'dand' in the right hand. This is written in 'Brahmmi' and 'Shrivardasas' in Kharoshti. Banerjee has assumed that in the present picture, the 'dand' of right hand in the picture is similar to that of the 'Hiraklees' depicted on Indo-greek coins, but it is unambiguous that the subject of the picture is entirely Indian and that it is from Pashupata cult. Consensus does not impede hindrance in relation to this. Evidence of the above-mentioned currencies is echoed by the fact that in the preceding first-second century BC, Pashupata cult started getting political protection. After the Maurya Period, the Indo-greeks, Pahlav and Kushan rulers promoted Shaivism, in which some of them were worshipper of Maheshwar. It is visible that the Maheshwar was usually used with Pashupata cult. Apart from this, the painting of 'Dand pashucharm dhari' and 'Pash pashucharm dhari' pictures on their coins seems to be related to Pashupata cult. It is well known that these aristocrats were the supporter of the Pashupata cult in their religious ideology. Therefore, he supported the Pashupatas and other religions along with Shaivism and Vaishnism. It is also known from the ancient evidence that Kunind, the ruler of Ujjayini, may have been related to Pashupata cult.

Apart from the evident literary evidence and currency evidences, the evolution of Pashupata cult prevailing in this era is reflected. Mahabharata and Pashupata sutra are important sources for this period. Scholars think that the mention of Shaivism in the Mahabharata is implicit, and their relation is from the earliest three centuries of Christ. But it is also possible that the Pashupata cult mentioned in Mahabharata should not be present and it is related to the period of the second and third centuries BC. The date of Pashupata cult has been confirmed by Anantakrishna Shastri between 100 and 200 AD. Sudhakar Chattopadhyay has conceded this principle that under the prescribed period, there was development in the two branches of Pashupata cult, one is the classical form of Pashupata cult, whose representative is Pashupata sutra, while the other party forms its scriptural form which is available in Mahabharata. It is indispensable to justify the theory that critical analysis of these two types of evidence can be done.

### 1.1. PASHUPATAS IN THE INDIAN MYTHOLOGY:

In the Mahabharata, there is a description of Shaivism related to Pashupata cult, which is divided into three categories: In the first place, the details are included, in which a hero has worshipped Lord Shiva and has been given the 'Pashupatastra', divine weapon of war. The second category is connected with the source written in praise of Shiva and in the third place there are such details which also contain the sutras of Pashupata cult in the establishment of companionship with Shaivism. In the Mahabharata, Pashupata cult is described directly at one place and it has been said that Pashupata was a popular community with Sankhya, Yoga, Panchraat and Vedas. Srikanth is described as the Vice-President of Pashupata-Shastra, but in this description, there is little light in the context of its historic presence. More importantly, there is an 'Daksha-Yagya' narrative, which makes the visions clear on different sides of the Pashupata cult. According to the narration of this narrative, it is known that in the contemporary society, there was no cosmology in the society for Pashupatas and the sect of the Maheshwars was different from the tradition of Vedic Rudra, because in this narrative, Maheshwar himself has explained to Uma himself that Under the contract no portion of the sacrifice is offered to them. In the second place, Daksha has also explained the rationale of his actions, saying that many Rudra are in his cognition, but he is unfamiliar with who is this Maheshwar. It is also clear from this narrative that it was against the 'Varnashram', which was not based on scriptures, which was based on the foundation

of 'Maheshwar Shiva'. It is a universal fact that the immediate society, Varanashram was overlaid on religion. In the same narration, the details of the invention of 'Veerbhadrha and Mahakali' by Mahadeva have been presented. These figures were included in non-Aryan elements. This narrative also mirrors that the significance of Sankhyoga's influence on the Pashupata cult. King Daksh's story reflects the social background of Pashupata-sect, because its worshipers have been described as 'Siddha' and 'Vidyadhar'. Ghosts, Monsters and Satans have been declared as their successors. It is also said that the devotees of the Shiva started sacrificing luncheon while performing yajna, some began to laugh, some began to rain blood to terminate the yajna. The nature of Veerbhadrha, which is painted, leads to non-Aryan elements. He has been described as a pungent male, whose eyes were very bloody, his hair was brown in color, his appearance was frightening in view, his hair was lifted upwards. The character of Veerbhadrha was Krishna and demonic. His clothes were reddish. In this context Maheshwar fever has been mentioned, which is an explanation of the fact that Pashupata Shiva is a provider of the diseases and also thereby providing liberation. Vedic Rudra has also manifested this sentiment. In this narrative, the site of Daksh-Yajna is propagated in the form of Gangadwar i.e. Haridwar. It is also mentioned in this narrative that Mahayogi Dadhichi had warned Daksha that he had committed a heinous crime by not invoking Lord Shiva in this yajna, because according to Dadhichi, if there is no worship of Lord Shiva then its neither Yajna nor religion. Daksh replied that the majority of Rudra, who holds the trident in hand and the Jataa on the head, resides here. He does not know any other Maheshwar. Dadhichi said that the entire devandal is incomprehensible compared to Shankar and this yajna has moved on the path of destruction. After this, Daksha said that Lord Vishnu is equally great, and will collect all the sacrificial offerings. King Daksha prayed Mahadev with many names after the destruction of the Yajna. There is also knowledge about the nature of Pashupata cult from its center. In the first place, the glory of this praise is devoted to the fact that a new interpretation of Pashupati has been made. In which the 'Pashu', Jeeva is attached to 'Pash', Maya. Shiva is her master. In the second place, Pashupati has also been called a 'Danddhari'. It appears that the Sannyasis of this sect had to bear the 'Dand' and the hairs on the head had to be shaved, because it has been clearly stated that the monks who carry the dand must have clean head. So, their name is Dandi-Mundi. It is also circulated that the 'Ripu nashak is 'dandswaroop'. The priest without hair and priest with Jataa are the same as you. They are said to be on a site called Dandi-Munda and Tindhandwadi. They are also described as having 'Jatil', 'Ugradand' and 'Kamandal carrier'. In the third place, the Pashupati has been given the name of 'Bhimvratdhar'. They have been addressed by the title of 'Gunhvradhari'. Probably 'Bhimvrhatradhar' means the Pashupatas. It is also possible that 'Bhimvratdhar' may be 'Mahavratradhar's second noun. It was related to the Kalamukh and Kapalika sect of Shaivism. In the fourth place, Shiva has been called as 'Kapal Hast' and the most loved material for him is ashes of cremation. All of these specialties are of the Pashupatas, but it should be remembered that the people of the Kapalika cult were originated from Pashupatas. In the fifth place, Pashupati has been depicted above Vishnu, Indra, Sun and other Gods. He is also called the 'Creator'. This fact is important, because he is considered as a creator by Pashupati who has been recognized as a characteristic of the Pashupata cult, which was accepted by Kalamukha in the long run. The same principle is reflected in Kalamukh saint 'Bonteyimuni's' work 'Ishwarkritwad siddhant'. It is also important that Shankaracharya had said this as 'Ishwarakarini'. At the end of the book, Pashupata-Vrat has been mentioned, which is compatible with all of the 'Varna-Dharma' and 'Ashraya-Dharma' and in contrast to any other part. In this context, it has also been prescribed that it is the achievement of this tough Pashupata-Vrat by practicing yoga and meditation. It is also important to note that in Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, these Yama Rules have been mentioned, which were unique parts of Pashupata cult. These Yum rules have also been mentioned in the records of the Kalamukhs. This Kalamukh principle was in existence in some form in Lakulish's Pashupata-cult, because in this archive, the Kalamukh principle has been shown related to Lakulish.

## 1.2. PASHUPATAS AS MENTIONED IN PASHUPATA SUTRAS:

It is reflected in the previous discussion that anti-shastra and non-Vedic elements was prevalent in the post Mauryan era of the foreign rulers (from second century AD to 3rd century AD) in the Pashupata cult. Probably, the foreign kings had provided protection to it against the Vedas culture, and helped in its establishment and its popularity was also being promoted in public. For this reason, this was necessary in the Hindu Sanatani society that it was felt that this Pashupata cult should be adapted to the Vedic tradition so that the society can be protect the Varnashram religion. It has been expressed that the period of Lakulish would have been in the second or first century AD. Therefore, there should be no objection to adopting it that it has been proved to be helpful in making the Lakulish Pashupta cult favorable to Vedic and Varanashram dharma. It is also notable to note that traditionally Lakulish was the one who created Pashupata Sutras, whose main aim was to adapt the scriptures of the Brahman and Vedic tradition. The creation of the Pashupata Sutras has been made between 100 AD to 200 AD, but it is also possible that this composition should be the work of the two centuries and even before, because in it the ideology of 'Karma siddhanta', has not been mentioned. It is evident from the study of Pashupata Sutras that it was contrary to the Vedic dharma described in the Mahabharata, because the Varnashrama Dharma has been followed in Pashupata Sutras. It has been clearly stated that the devotee should not have any conversation with a Shudra or a woman, and if he gets confused,

then he should do pranayama, should chant Rudri Gayatri or 'Bahuroopi', which Kaundinya considered a name for eternal Shiva. There are some other specialties of this kind of Pashupata tradition which we can call the Lakulish Pashupata cult. In this first place, the non sanatani element of the Pashupatas has been given special emphasis on sanatani yoga in this cult. It is said in the beginning of the text- 'That is: Patshupateh: Pashupatam Yogaviddhi Vyakhyasamah.' In the second place, the principles of devotion have been given a special place in the Pashupata Sutras. For example, it has been said that meditation should be done in the heart. Its main purpose is to get Rudra-Saasya. It has not been given the details of those disciplines, which have been the characteristics of other religious systems. In the third place, some specific things have also been pointed out about the behavior of the Pashupata ascetics, such as a monk should use ashes in the body three times a day. Must stay in the solitary house or the cave or the Shamshan ghat. Must control his sensory organs. Should live life by alms. It is also permitted to eat meat, if the animal is not killed himself. One should wear a garment and behave like this so that by which the common man is able to get rid of the monk, and see him with hatred.

## 2. DEPICTION IN PURANAS:

The study of Vayu Purana shows that this mythology was familiar with the communal nature of Shaivism. In many places, efforts have been made to prove superiority with Vishnu and Brahma. The traditional rivalry of Vaishnav and Shaiva also gives the same impression. But the communal rivalry which is indicated in it seems to be related to the liberal tradition, and from this point of view, the communal atmosphere of Vayu Purana meets with the preceding communal images of Mahabharata, and not from the epic communal accounts of Mahabharata, which are famous for its rivalry. It is natural in this communal background that the oldest creed of Shaiva-Dharma is in Pashupata cult. In the 23rd chapter of Vayu purana, there is a list of twenty-six incarnations of Lord Shiva and the list of four disciples of each of them in relation to Maheshwar Avatar Yoga. It appears that this tradition had the effect of the 'Chaarvuyuha Siddhant' of the Vaishnavas. Undoubtedly, this list was related to the Pashupata sages, because the names of the monks who came to Mathura's records are also found here. In addition, there are other lists of Pashupata teachers in the later Gupta literature, and some similarities can be seen in the list of Vayu Purana. Lakulish and 'Kayavarohan' have also been mentioned clearly, which seems to be the fact that Vayu Purana was fully acquainted with the incarnation of Lakulish.

### 2.1. THE APPEARANCE IN PANCHARTH BHASYA:

In the Gupta age, a strong proof of the prosperity of the Pashupata cult is the commentary on the Pashupata Sutras by Kaundinya called 'Panchartha Bhashya'. Its time would have been sometime between the 4th century AD and the sixth century AD. It appears that one or two other commentators must have been present before the chronology, who would have written criticism on the Pashupata sutras, because the Pancharth Bhashya has been presented in different variations in many sources. Unfortunately, the texts of earlier commentators before Kaundinya are not available. Kaundinya has elaborated the story of the incarnation of Krishna in the form of Lakulish. Shiva was born in this form in Agnihotra form and came to Ujjain. This Brahmavarta resident gave initiation to Kushik. There are five popular mantras - Saddozat, Vamdev, Aghor, Thatpurush and Ishan. The Kaundinya has put a special emphasis on the first mantra. From his commentary, it is also known that the life of the worshiper of a Pashupata devotee was divided into many stages. There were mainly four stages - in the first place, a true yogi had to live the life, in which there is complete control over the mind and body. In the second stage, the Shaivite devotees abandon all external rituals and live in the society, while living in such a way that the society ignores it and neglects its society. In the third place, the devotee lives in the Shamshan Ghat and in this state, he gets the knowledge of the transience of everything. In the fourth state, he renounces completely and remains absorbed in the meditation of the Pasupati and remains unaffected by his quaint surroundings. Kaundinya has told the five main principles of the Pashupata cult- First being the 'Gyaan', The knowledge of Pasupati in the form of the last creator 'Karta'. The second is 'Karya', 'Jeeva', soul. Third comes 'Yoga', by which the soul receives unity with 'Pati', Pashupati. The fourth one is none other than philosophy of 'Yama' means behavior by the seeker. Finally the 'Dukhant', Liberty means freedom S. N. Das Gupta has expressed the opinion that the Pashupata cult that has been mentioned in the Pashupata-Sutra and Kundinya Bhashya is similar to that of the Pashupata cult described in Madhav's 'Sarvadasan-sangrah' and 'Shankar Bhashya'. In the second place, the Pashupata cult mentioned in the Kundinya's commentary is primarily a Brahmin religion, because only Brahman can adopt the initiation of Pashupata cult, but in many ways it is also against the Vedas, because in Brahmin religion the observance of the disciplines has not been done somewhere and the chanting of 'Om' has been made the medium of meditation. It seems evident from the commentary of the Kaundinya that in this period, there was a need to provide a decent status to the Pashupata cult in society, so that it could be properly compiled by the ideologues. So far this commentary is valid, which proves its popularity.

### 2.2. Tracing the Roots in the Upanishads

The Atharvashiras Upanishad is considered of Gupta era, which mentions Pashupata cult. In the Markandeya Purana, Pashupata-Yoga has been described, which is subtle than the Pashupata-yoga of Vayu purana. It has been revealed by the scholars that the description of the Vayu purana Pashupata-Yoga is of later period from the description of Pashupata-yoga of Markandeya Purana. Perhaps in the Gupta age itself, the development of Pashupata cult also took place in Southeast Asia, because in the 'Kambuj' inscription of fifth-sixth century AD, Record number 10, a Pashupata scholar's name 'Vidyapushp' is mentioned. Apart from this, the worship of Maheshwar has been mentioned in other records of Kambuj. Thus, the Pashupata cult crossed the boundaries of India and had also been broadcast in South-East Asia and became an influential element in social and political life here.

### 3. CONCLUSION:

In the early medieval period, Orissa had become a famous center of Pashupata cult. Statues of Lakulish and other scholars have been available from this area. We can tell many temples of Orissa related to Pashupata cult, such as Lingaraj temple, Parashurameshwar, Kapilesvar, Mukteshwar, Kedareshwar, Megheshwar, Rajarani (Orissa). The Bhanraj dynasty kings accepted 'Vrishabh', Taurus as the symbol of their princely state. From which it is assumed that he was the patron of Pashupata cult. Chandel rulers of Central India can also be said to be related to Pashupata cult. Kalinjar, who was the center of his power, was a famous center of Pashupata cult, as revealed by the evidence of Kurma Purana and other mythologies. Kalinjer inscription presents the proof of Mandap building in Neelkanth temple situated in Kalisar by Shri Murthy in respect of Pashupatacharya. The popularity of this religion is also highlighted by the Kandariya Mahadev temple, Matgeshwar and Battesvar temples. In Nepal, the temple of Pashupatinath proves the popularity of Pashupata cult. The inscription of Vishnugupta also proves popularity of Pashupatas. In the Middle Ages, Rajasthan was well-known for spread of Lakhulish Pashupata cult. From here the former medieval statues of Lakulish have been available from places like Udaipur, Jodhpur, Ajmer, Kota, Siroha, Chittaur, Bikaner, etc. which prove the popularity of this religion. Inscriptions have been received from Harsh, Abu, Ekalingji, Chittaurgarh and Udaipur which are related to Pashupatas. Pashupatas were not only confined to North India. It was also given respectable place in South India. From the inscriptions, it is known that Pashupata cult was of special publicity in this area. According to the records of Nagarjuna, during the time of Ikshvaku King Shantimool, a Shiva temple named 'Punyabhadraswami' was constructed. After the Gupta period, Pashupata cult became very popular during the pre-medieval period. The evidence is the mythological literature, cosmic literature, description of Huean-tsang, Pashupata idols and temple In Puranic literature, Kurma Purana, Ling Purana, Shiva Purana and Skanda Purana are prominent, whereas in the category of temporal literature, Harshacharita and Kadambari's texts have a special significance. There is also a special significance of South India's 'Mattaavilas Prahasan'. Apart from this, the names of Sanskrit have been mentioned directly and indirectly in the plays. In his commentary, Shankar has presented a description of Pashupata cult. Commentaries on 'Shankar Bhasya' by Ramnuja, Vachaspati Mishra, Bhaskaracharya, Yamunacharya, etc. also mentions about Pashupata cult. Evidence of the 'Sarvadarshan sangrah' of Madhava in 14th century AD is also important. In Rajshekhar and Haribhadra's 'Shaddarshan Samuchchaya', the Pashupatas have also been mentioned. The testimony of Guna Ratna and the importance of 'Karvan Mahatmya' is also important for this period. On the basis of all these evidences, first of all, we will present a historical survey of the development of the Pashupata cult from the seventh century AD to the 12th-13th century AD. In ancient India, Shaivism had been established as a major religion and also got state protection. For example, the Maukhari dynasty was biased of Shaivism. Bana has him selves written in the ornamental language that, like the footprints of Shiva, the Maukharis are like a spontaneous Shaiva. In Ishan Varman's Haraha record, worship of Shiva and reconstruction of a dilapidated temple is clearly mentioned in honor of Shiva. In the Asirgarh record, Ravi Varman, the successor of Ishan Varman has been described as the worshiper of Maheshwar. Although it cannot be said in a nutshell that devotion of Maukharis was communal or not, but the 'Maheshwar' name used here is important. It is evident that in the 8th century, Shankaracharya had called Pashupatas as Maheshwar and in other proofs also the word 'Maheshwar' has been used for Pashupatas.

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